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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 PPT-01 INSE-00 DHA-02

ORM-02 L-03 H-02 SS-15 NSC-05 SY-05 FBIE-00 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 /059 W
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R 091111Z FEB 76
FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1953
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L LENINGRAD 0193

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SREF, CVIS, UR, US
SUBJECT: EMIGRATION CASE OF FELIX AGNOVICH

REF: LENINGRAD 162, 75 STATE 268573, 75 MOSCOW 16402

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SUBSEQUENT TO INFO REPORTED LENINGRAD 162, LOCAL DISSIDENT SOURCE INFORMED POLOFF THAT FELIX ARONOVICH HAD BEEN APPREHENDED AND DETAINED BY MILITIA MEN INFRONT OF CONSULATE GENERAL WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO CALL ON CONSULAR OFFICER ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 29. POLOFF VISITED ARONOVICH AT HIS APARTMENT ON FEBRUARY 8 TO CONFIRM DETAILS OF STORY, WHICH ARE AS FOLLOWS.

END SUMMARY.

2. FELIX ARONOVICH, WELL-KNOWN LENINGRAD REFUSENIK, ATTEMPTED TO CONTACT CONGEN BY PHONE ON JANUARY 29 IN CONNECTION WITH HIS DESIRE TO AMEND EMIGRATION PAPERS CURRENTLY HELD AT LENINGRAD OVIR. IN SHORT, OVIR TOLD ARONOVICH IN SUMMER 1975 THAT HE SHOULD PUT HIS PAPERS IN FOR ISRAEL RATHER THAN UNITED STATES, INDICATING THAT CHANCES FOR RECEIVING PERMISSION WERE MUCH GREATER. ARONOVICH FINALLY AGREED, BUT RECENTLY DECIDED TO CHANGE DESIRED DESTINATION BACK TO UNITED STATES IN VIEW OF HIS MOTHER'S STRONG REQUEST AND HER INTERCESSION ON HIS BEHALF WITH WHITE HOUSE, DEPARTMENT, AND CONGRESS. MAIN LENINGRAD NOTARIAL OFFICE
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HAD REFUSED TO AUTHENTICATE ARONOVICH'S SIGNED "AMENDMENT" TO

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OVIR AND, HENCE, HE WISHED TO CONFER WITH CONSOFF ABOUT SITUATION AND POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING DESIRED NOTARIAL SERVICE AT CONGEN. THIS WAS REASON FOR HIS ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT CONGEN BY PHONE.

3. ARONOVICH SAID HE CALLED CONGEN CONSULAR SECTION THREE TIMES ON JANUARY 29, BUT LINE WAS INTERRUPTED EACH TIME. ON THIRD OCCASION FEMALE VOICE SAID THAT "CONGEN TELEPHONE NOT WORKING PROPERLY AT MOMENT AND YOU SHOULD COME TO CONGEN PERSONALLY TO SEE CONSULAR OFFICER." ARONOVICH SAID THAT THIRD FEMALE VOICE WAS NOT RPT NOT ONE OF TWO CONGEN LOCAL SECRETARIES WITH WHOM HE SPOKE WHILE ATTEMPTING TO REACH CONSOFF.

4. ARONOVICH ACCORDINGLY CAME TO CONGEN AT ABOUT 1200 ON JANUARY 29 AND WAS IMMEDIATELY APPREHENDED BY CONGEN MILITIA AND TAKEN TO ADJOINING "READY ROOM" AND HELD TWO HOURS. MILITIA MAJOR WAS POLITE, SAID MILITIA'S DUTY WAS TO "PROTECT CONGEN," AND ADVISED ARONOVICH THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH DIPLOMATIC AGENCY TO ARRANGE CALL ON CONSOFF. AFTER RELEASE BY MILITIA, ARONOVICH SAID LENINGRAD KGB AGENTS "CONFIRMED" THAT HE SHOULD NOT RPT NOT DEAL DIRECTLY WITH CONGEN. ARONOVICH THEN WENT TO DIPLOMATIC AGENCY AND TALKED WITH DEPUTY CHIEF YU. S. CHERNOV WHO SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO MATTER AND CHECK WITH OVIR REGARDING HIS CASE. ARONOVICH CALLED CHERNOV ON PHONE ON JANUARY 30 AND CHERNOV SAID THAT ARONOVICH COULD EXPECT "POSITIVE REPLY REGARDING CASE WITHIN TEN DAYS," I. E. ON FEBRUARY 9.

5. ARONOVICH SAID HE STILL PESSIMISTIC REGARDING POSSIBILITY OF FAVORABLE ACTION IN HIS CASE, BUT WILL VISIT OVIR ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11 IF HE HAS NOT HEARD ANYTHING BEFORE THAT TIME. POLOFF WILL CONTACT ARONOVICH AFTER OVIR VISIT AND CONGEN WILL REPORT ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTS.

6. CONGEN PLANS TO PROTEST TO DIPLOMATIC AGENCY THEIR GRATUITOUS INTERCESSION AND, OF COURSE, MILITIA DENIAL OF ARONOVICH'S ENTRY TO CONGEN. HOWEVER, WE WILL HOLD PROTEST IN ABEYANCE PENDING FEBRUARY 11 OUTCOME OF PROMISED "POSITIVE REPLY" IN ARONOVICH'S CASE.
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